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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9939  
INFO RUEHDS/AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA 8239  
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 4490  
RUEHDJ/AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI 3983  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 1160  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1865  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1844  
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RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

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DEPT FOR AF/E, AF/EPS, AF/PD, AND OES/ENV  
USAID FOR AFR/EA  
EMBASSY LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KCOR](#) [PTER](#)  
PGOV, PHSA, PINS, MOPS, KISL, KE  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR BELLAMY VISITS COAST PROVINCE

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In a January 31 February 3 visit to Mombasa and the Coast Province, the Ambassador discussed counter-terrorism with Provincial Commissioner Maina. Ambassador Bellamy called on Mayor Taib of Mombasa who requested disaster management assistance and met with members of Parliament from Mombasa who described their constituencies as marginalized by the central government. The Ambassador toured the Port of Mombasa to review modernization plans. Interacting with the private sector, Ambassador Bellamy held a lunch for Christian leaders of the Coast province, spoke to the Muslim community, addressed a large gathering from the coastal tourism community, and ended his visit with a tour of two USAID-supported facilities. END SUMMARY.

#### COUNTER-TERRORISM

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¶2. (SBU) The Ambassador and Provincial Commissioner (PC) Cyrus Maina met to discuss security and counter-terrorism issues. [NOTE: President Kibaki ordered PC Maina into retirement on Feb. 27 as part of a larger reshuffling of local authorities. END NOTE] The PC said Muslims on the coast felt targeted by USG anti-terrorism efforts following the 2002 Kikambala bombing, but this sentiment is starting to change as many Muslims realize there is not a planned campaign to target Muslims. Maina further noted that despite Embassy outreach, many U.S.-funded projects in his province are not well advertised. Maina strongly advocated for increased work with youth and women groups through cooperatives to improve their income generating capabilities. The PC's biggest push was for some form of news broadcast to Northeastern and Coast Provinces. He proposed a radio show or a weekly newspaper, which would advocate a U.S. perspective.

¶3. (SBU) After the PC expressed his concerns, the Ambassador updated the PC on the Anti Terrorism Assistance (ATA) office's coastal security initiative and discussed ideas for improving disaster management capabilities. The PC said the coast lacks the capability to respond to either natural disasters or terrorist attacks, saying the first necessary step is a legal framework to coordinate disaster efforts as well as to prosecute perpetrators of major attacks. He said his Provincial Disaster Committee is

useless due to lack of equipment and a workable authority for disaster management.

#### THE PORT OF MOMBASA

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14. (SBU) In the Ambassador's first visit to the largest port in East Africa, he met with Harbor Master Twalib Khamis and Chief Engineer Johnson Atonga. Their message was that privatization and modernization would be key to the Port. They detailed recent purchases using \$120 million in World Bank assistance for improving the transfer of goods through Mombasa. Khamis and Atonga also noted the Port works with police on the coast regarding coastal security patrols, and agreed it could be expanded-on particularly in anti-piracy patrols, as the Search and Rescue Center becomes operational in April.

15. (SBU) Khamis and Atonga said that capacity constraint was the Port's biggest challenge, with 90% of containers leaving the port by road and only 10% by rail. Customs issues are also a constraint on the port, with an average of 9,000 containers a day arriving undocumented, resulting in an automatic two-week delay which in turn results in a shortage of space. Each container now 'only' requires 11 stamps to clear customs versus the 21 stamps previously required. A new electronic customs tracking system from Korea may reduce clearance time from the current 18-day average wait.

#### THE MAYOR AND MOMBASA MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT COMPLAIN

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16. (U) Mombasa Mayor Taib Ali Taib made an appeal for disaster management assistance and training when the Ambassador visited his office. [NOTE: Mayor Taib was removed from office on February 16 due to a corruption scandal surrounding a recent tender award to an Italian garbage company. The Mayor is currently appealing his removal in court. END NOTE] Mayor Taib criticized the government for not tackling these issues after the 1998 Embassy bombing, or even after the 2002 Kikambala bombing. When media asked the Ambassador about corruption issues, he recommended the GoK take action to curb corruption, but he did not comment on any individuals within the government.

17. (SBU) Hosting a dinner for three Mombasa MPs, Ramadhan Kajembe, Anania Mwaboza, and Najib Balala, the Ambassador learned of their great dissatisfaction with the central government. The MPs said they felt as if the up-country-dominated central government was attempting to 'colonize' the Coast and dominate Coastal politics. They further explained that in Parliament they feel marginalized and are treated as radicals and outsiders, while officers from other regions dominate local government's highest levels. MP Balala reported that coastal constituencies are chronically under-funded, affecting efforts to improve schools and roads.

#### TOURISM INDUSTRY TALKS TRAVEL WARNING

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18. (U) Several prominent associations from the tourism industry gathered to hear the Ambassador give remarks. In a question and answer session which focused on the travel warning, Tasneem Adamji of the Kenya Association of Tour Operators explained that the Kenya tourism industry spent \$75,000 last year to lobby for a rewording and downgrading of the travel warning with little result. The Ambassador promised the audience that he would review the travel warning, but explained that travelers must be warned if risks exist. The Ambassador called on the industry to challenge the Kenyan government to improve the tourism infrastructure, including security, telecom, power, and roads. He recommended that the tourism industry work with the Kenyan government and possibly USAID to direct funding towards conservation, since Kenya's environmental heritage is a key reason why Americans visit.

## CHRISTIAN LEADERS SAY THEY'RE THE MAJORITY

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¶9. (SBU) The Ambassador hosted a lunch with a range of Christian leaders from the Coast, including Monsignor Michael Ruwa, Anglican Bishops Julius Kalu and Lawrence Dena, Methodist Bishop Phius Kagwi, Reverend Mbuthia Waigwa, Pentecostal Reverend Sielel, and Jane Gilani the Coast Area Coordinator, National Christian Council of Kenya (NCCCK). The Christian leaders described their relationship with Muslim community leaders as lukewarm, opining that Muslims were not interested in activities that span Muslim and Christian communities. They also theorized that Christians in Coast Province were the majority, and wondered why we appeared so focused on Muslim outreach and not community outreach in general, particularly in regards to educational funding.

## MUSLIM OUTREACH - A SUCCESS

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¶10. (U) The Coast region's most popular Muslim radio station, Radio Rahma, interviewed the Ambassador using questions gathered from listeners. His answers to tough questions on U.S. policy regarding Iran, Iraq, and terrorism were well received, according to one listener Mohamed Hamid Khamis, a Mombasa businessman and community leader. Many listeners agreed, but wished the program had been longer and others recommended that it be the first of a series. The Ambassador later attended a graduation ceremony at the Muslim Civic Education Trust (MCET) in central Mombasa to recognize local young Muslim women who had recently completed a computer-familiarization course. MP Balala's comments were seconded by the Ambassador, who commended community leaders on the value of this program in assisting historically marginalized Muslim girls.

## MANGOES AND MANGROVES

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¶11. (U) Touring the USAID-supported Milly Fruit Processing plant, which produces mango juice from crops in the Tana River area, the Ambassador listened to Director Saida Rashid, who explained that bad road conditions result in high wastage rates of up to 50% of the 10,000 tons of fruit produced in the Tana River delta. Energy costs are another concern. Continuing up the coast to Gede, the Ambassador visited a community on the Arabuko-Sokoke Forest, the last remaining portion of virgin coastal forest that once stretched from Somalia to Mozambique. The Ambassador toured an aloe nursery in the forest, visited a butterfly exhibition center, and officially opened a modern honey processing facility at the Kipepeo center in Gede.

¶12. (U) COMMENT: The Ambassador's visit to Mombasa and its environs was a useful exercise in the Embassy's continued attempts to increase its presence on the coast of Kenya. During his visit, a variety of stakeholders encouraged the Ambassador to continue increasing the Embassy's visibility in Mombasa and on the Coast. One initiative that post would like to consider is the development of a Virtual Presence Post as a means of increasing communication with coastal Kenya. END COMMENT.

BELLAMY